



Australian Bureau of Statistics

2007.0 - Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing, ABS Views on Content and Procedures, 2006

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2006 Census - consultation invited by abs

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is seeking comment from the public and census data users about the content and procedures of the next census, which will be held on Tuesday 8 August 2006.

The invitation to have a say in the way the nation's largest statistical collection is undertaken is contained in an **Information Paper: 2006 Census: ABS Views on Content and Procedures** (cat. no. 2007.0), released today by the ABS.

Release of the Information Paper marks the first step in the public consultation process for the 2006 Census, and will build upon comment already received from user groups on content of the Census.

The Information Paper describes the proposed procedures and topics for the 2006 Census. It covers key issues such as:

- topics which the ABS recommends for inclusion, review or exclusion from the 2006 Census; and
- views on the possibility of linking anonymised census data to other data sources to expand the use of census data for statistical purposes.

The paper also explains ABS's stringent arrangements to protect the privacy of individuals and the confidentiality of the information supplied by them.

Users of census data and others are invited to comment on any aspect of the conduct and content of the census, using the submission guidelines in the Information Paper. Submissions are sought by 30 July, 2003.

Census Manager Paul Williams noted that the public consultation was an essential part of ensuring that the Census was in the best position to meet the changing expectations of both the public and census users.

"For example, linking of census data with other data in a secure environment, and without revealing individual identity -- could provide more insight into medical conditions and the social aspects surrounding them, paving the way for life-saving advances in medical science," he said.

"In 2001 we received some 130 suggestions and requests from the public and data users. This is a relatively low number, and indicates we are including the topics the community wants to see in

the Census.

"Most suggestions for 2001 related to the Disability topic, which ABS recognised as fitting the scope of the Census. However testing for 2001 could not identify a suitable question. Testing has already begun on the disability topic for the 2006 Census.

"Other suggestions and requests were also received on the eve of the Census, at a time when it was not possible to consider implementing those requests because it was just too late.

"This early consultation process enables such views to be adequately considered in the lead-up to the Census.

"Responses, including the advice of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, will be used in preparing a final plan to be submitted to the Commonwealth Government for consideration in mid 2004."

Copies of the Information Paper may be downloaded from the ABS website at **www.abs.gov.au/census**.

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